

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Reissue Application of:

ROGER J. LEYDEN ET AL

Ser. No.: 08/807,120

(U.S. Pat. 5,552,771, issued 9/3/96)

Filed: 2/19/97

RETRACTABLE SENSOR
FOR AN ALARM SYSTEM

Art Unit: 2617

Examiner: A. Wong

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RESPONSE

Assistant Commissioner of Patents

Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

This is a response to the Office Action dated January 26, 1998.

Claims 1-14 are pending in the application. All claims stand rejected under 35 USC §103 as obvious over U.S. Patent No. 5,341,124, to Leyden et al (Leyden) in view of U.S. Patent Nos. 4,989,805 (Burke) and 5,124,685 (Rankin).

Applicant's invention is related to alarm systems of the type useable to monitor portable consumer articles. One exemplary, suitable environment for the present invention is an electronics store in which a large number of hand holdable articles, such as cameras, are displayed. Commonly, cameras are displayed on shelves in such a manner that a

37 CFR 1.8

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consumer can go from one camera to the next, picking it up, inspecting its features, and potentially effecting operation thereof.

Heretofore, as elaborated in the Background portion of Rankin, security systems for this type of display have taken different forms. Purely mechanical systems have been used. As Rankin points out, these mechanical systems can be defeated by severing the cable which connects between the article being monitored and a fixed support.

To avoid this problem, electrical alarm systems have been devised. Severance of a tether with conductors therein breaks a circuit which causes a detectable alarm signal to be generated

Ideally, at these displays, the amount of cable, mechanical or electrical, that is exposed, is minimized. This results a neat appearance at the display, avoids entanglement of cables from adjacent articles, allows freedom of movement of articles within the restraints of the cable without interference with other cables, and allows the store owner to conveniently monitor cables visually.

Rankin identifies one system which contributes to exposed cable reduction, that being the retractable mechanical cable which has been identified as prior art in this application. The mechanical retracting cable has the limitation, as noted above, that it is severable to defeat the security system.

Rankin, in the Background portion of his patent, identifies the desirability of electrical tethers, but also, at the time of his invention, failed to recognize the practicality of using a retracting device for a conductive cable in a security system, as evidenced by his design and stated objective to avoid the use of any electrical wiring between the object being monitored and a support. Rankin states in his patent:

There is no danger of electric shock to persons handling the merchandise due to faulty wiring because the cable does not form part of an electrical detection circuit. (Col. 4, ll. 19-22)

To reduce the exposed cable, Rankin took a course that was entirely different than the applicant's. Rankin provided a dedicated mechanical tether which, when severed, allowed an electrical switch to be activated. Rankin specifically teaches away from that which the applicant claims. With the applicant's system, a tether with conductors therein can be retracted to minimize the amount of exposed cable. The tether may perform dual purposes; a) mechanically confining the object being monitored to within a range corresponding to the length of the tether and b) providing a conductive path for electrical connection for an alarm system.

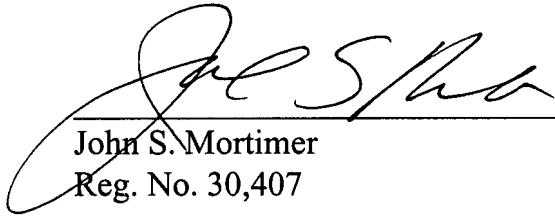
By visiting any high volume electronics store with security systems, the Examiner can take notice of the fact that no solution to the problem of excess exposed cable exists commercially. Instead, stores have commonly contended with the problem of unsightly, excessive, and potentially tangled cables between articles.

The Examiner cites Burke for the disclosure of a multi-conductor cable that is retractable within a housing. Applicant's invention is not the mere retraction and coiling of a cable with a conductor therein. What applicant's invention is directed to is the retraction of a cable with conductors therein that is integrated into a security system, as for portable objects.

Burke nowhere suggests that his cable might be used other than in a telephone environment. Leyden is entirely silent with respect to coiling any cable. Rankin teaches away from coiling cable with a conductor therein.

In light of the above, the applicant's claimed invention is not obvious from the cited art. Reconsideration of the rejection of the claims and allowance of the case are requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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July 27, 1997